ENCLOSURE 5

Kenilworth Town Council

Jubilee House, Smalley Place, Kenilworth, CV8 1QG

Telephone: 01926 859155

E-mail: kentc@kenilworth.org

Town Clerk: Miss M S Field

COMMUNITY FORUM POLICY

Date of Approval – 30 November 2023

Date of Review – November 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Kenilworth Town Council ("Council") recognises the importance of community engagement through its Community Engagement policy, which sets out how events will be used to engage with residents about issues that affect them. The Community Forum is one such event.

Previous to the creation of this policy Warwickshire County Council ("WCC") took the lead in the organisation of Community Forum events in Kenilworth.

By taking ownership of this responsibility the Council aims to ensure that Community Forum events are a vibrant and relevant platform that keeps as many residents as possible informed about and engaged with major issues and developments affecting community life in the town.

2. LOGISTICS OF COMMUNITY FORUM EVENTS

2.1. With effect from May 2024, three Community Forum events will be held in each civic year, chaired by the Mayor. A minimum of six weeks' notice will be given of the date of Community Forum events.

2.2. The venue, timing, date and subject material of Community Forum events may vary and will be determined by the Mayor in consultation with the Clerk and Council Group Leaders with notice being given to the WCC Localities and Communities Officer.

2.3. Possible subject material will include, but is not limited to, the following:
- local policing priorities;
- major housing, business, leisure, cultural, transport and educational developments in the town;
- community initiatives, and
- the award of community grants.

2.4. The cost of organising Community Forum Events will be met by WCC.

2.5 Speakers to be invited to speak at Community Forum events will be agreed by the Mayor in consultation with the Clerk and Council Group Leaders and notified to the WCC Localities and Communities Officer who will arrange for speaker invitations to be issued.

2.6 Any votes taken at a Community Forum event, e.g. about the award of grant money to community projects, will be decided by majority vote.

2.7 Where possible, Community Forum events will be recorded and made available publicly online by the Council.

2.8. A summary of key points arising from the meetings will be produced by the WCC Localities and Communities Officer in consultation with the Mayor and made available via the Council's website and digital media platforms.

3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The success of Community Events will be determined by:

• the number of participants;

• the demographic breadth of participants;

• the variety of subjects discussed, and

• regular feedback from residents, whether they attend the events or not.

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SICKNESS AND ABSENCE POLICY

Date of Approval – 30 November 2023

Date of Review – November 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council is committed to the care and well-being of its employees.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to ensure all staff members have access to information relating to sickness and absence and are aware of the steps they must follow when absent from work. This policy applies to all flexible working arrangements.

1.3 By managing sickness and absence, the Council will continue to provide a high quality service to members of the public.

1.4 This policy covers:

- sickness leave
- unauthorised absence and lateness
- annual leave
- compassionate and/or emergency leave
- time off in lieu
- medical appointments
- maternity/paternity/adoption/parental leave

2. Sickness leave

2.1 The Council recognises that there will be occasions when staff are unable to work due to sickness. The Council provides a sick pay scheme for its employees in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) terms and conditions. Details of sick pay are included in the employee's contract.

2.2 If an employee is unable to attend work due to sickness, they must inform the Clerk, (in relation to Town Clerk absence – this should be notified to the leader of the Council) giving the reason for sickness, the likely duration and the expected date of return. This must be done as soon as practical on the first day of absence so that service levels can be maintained. Regular contact must be maintained with the Clerk, (in relation to Town Clerk absence – contact with the leader of the Council) during a period of absence.

2.3 For absence of seven days or less, employees are required to complete the self-certification documentation as outlined in the Employment Rights Act 1996. For all absences which exceed a seven day period, a medical certificate is required.

2.4 Employees who are frequently absent could be suffering from poor health which may require medical investigation. The Council will offer support and guidance in consultation with the employee, and will consider referral to occupational health specialist services if deemed appropriate.

2.5 All sickness absence will be recorded. The Council will investigate and assess whether further action is necessary if periods of absence due to short-term self-certification sickness reach unacceptable levels, or if patterns emerge.

2.6 The Council takes a sympathetic view towards genuine ill health problems and will provide a supportive approach to employees who have been subject to long-term sickness. An employee returning to work following a period of long-term sickness will be supported on their return to work, and the following options may be considered:

- Phased return to work
- Change of role or working pattern
- Provision of specialist equipment

2.7 In cases where an employee's absence reaches excessive levels or there is a lack of information about the circumstances of the sickness absence, the Council may request medical information about their condition from their GP.

2.8 Any medical information received by the Council will be treated as strictly confidential. Any expense in obtaining medical information from the GP will be met by the Council.

3 Unauthorised absence and lateness

3.1 Unauthorised absence occurs when an employee fails to attend work and has not made arrangements with the Clerk, (in relation to Town Clerk absence – this should be notified to the leader of the Council).

3.2 Where an employee returns to work following an unauthorised absence, they will be required to attend a meeting with the Clerk, (in relation to Town Clerk absence – this should be a meeting with the leader of the Council) to explain their absence. The employee will be expected to take any unauthorised absence from their annual leave entitlement, or if no entitlement remains, pay will be deducted for the period of unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence may result in formal disciplinary action being taken.

3.3 There may be occasions when it is unavoidable to be late for work. The employee should contact the Clerk, (in relation to Town Clerk – this should be notified to the leader of the Council) to explain the reasons for any delay. The employee will be expected to make up any time lost at work due to lateness. Persistent lateness may result in formal disciplinary action being taken.

4 Annual Leave

4.1 Details of annual leave entitlements are included in an employee's contract, in line with NJC terms and conditions.

4.2 The annual leave period runs from the anniversary of an Officers commencement of employment. A maximum of ten days (pro rata) annual leave may be carried over from one year's entitlement to the next, subject to operational needs and the Town Clerks prior approval.

4.3 Requests for annual leave are at the discretion of the Town Clerk, with consideration of the operational requirements of the Council being taken into account before a decision is made. Annual leave requests will not be unreasonably refused.

4.4 Where two or more employees request annual leave on the same dates, and it is not operationally possible to grant all the requests, approval will be at the discretion of the Town Clerk

5 Compassionate and/or emergency leave

5.1 Compassionate leave is at the overall discretion of the Town Clerk. The Council recognises that each individual's respective relationships are different, however in order to achieve consistency, in general paid compassionate leave will be granted in the following circumstances:

 the death of a close family member i.e. spouse, civil partner, child, sibling, parent (or equivalent in-laws) or grand-parent
 the diagnosis of, or final stages of care for, a serious (life threatening) illness affecting a close family relative
 the employee falling victim to a serious crime
 fire/flood/burglary at the employee's home
 road traffic collisions or other distressing accidents/incidents involving the employee or a close family member

5.2 The length of paid compassionate leave granted is at the discretion of the Town Clerk, but is limited to a maximum of five days. Where a situation requires an extended period of leave beyond five days, other options should be discussed with the Clerk, (in relation to Town Clerk absence – this should be discussed with the leader of the Council) including use of Time Off in Lieu, annual leave and/or a period of unpaid leave.

5.3 Requests for compassionate leave for situations not included above will be considered on an individual basis.

5.4 Requests for emergency leave are at the discretion of the Town Clerk. The Council

recognises that each individual's personal circumstances will dictate what may be deemed as an emergency, however in order to achieve consistency, in general paid emergency leave of one day will be granted in the following circumstances:

 to provide assistance or make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependant who is ill or injured
 on the occasion of an unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant.

5.5 Employees are expected to use the day's paid emergency leave to make any ongoing care arrangements for dependents. Any additional requests for leave should be considered as requests for annual leave, and assessed using the Council's annual leave guidelines.

6 Time off in lieu (TOIL)

6.1 The standard Council working week is 37 hours. Employee's individual weekly hours are detailed in their employment contracts.

6.2 The Council recognises an employee's right to receive recompense for working beyond their contracted hours, either financially or as time off. Any work conducted beyond contractual hours must be agreed with the Town Clerk and fall within the employees job description/requirements.

6.3 The Council encourages the use of TOIL, and welcomes employee's consideration of management of the Council salary budget. TOIL requests will be considered in the same way as annual leave requests, with the need to maintain operational effectiveness.

7 Medical appointments

7.1 Employees are expected to arrange medical appointments out of normal working hours wherever possible.

7.2 The Council recognises this is not always possible. Where it is necessary to make an appointment during normal working hours, employees are encouraged to make the appointments at either the start or end of the day where possible to minimise disruption to the work of the Council.

7.3 It is at the discretion of the Town Clerk whether employees are required to make up their working hours for medical appointments and evidence may be requested.

7.4 In-patient appointments or procedures taking the whole day will be treated as sick leave in accordance with the procedures outlined in section 2.

8 Maternity/paternity/adoption/parental leave

8.1 The Council recognises an employee's right to maternity/paternity/adoption/parental leave as set out in the relevant legislation.

8.2 Eligible employees can take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave. The first 26 weeks is known as 'Ordinary Maternity Leave', the last 26 weeks as 'Additional Maternity Leave'. The earliest that leave can be taken is 11 weeks before the expected week of

childbirth, unless the baby is born early. Employees must take at least 2 weeks after the birth (or 4 weeks if they're a factory worker).

8.3 Statutory Maternity Pay for eligible employees can be paid for up to 39 weeks, usually as follows:

- the first 6 weeks: 90% of their average weekly earnings (AWE) before tax
- the remaining 33 weeks: £172.48 or 90% of their AWE (whichever is lower)

Tax and National Insurance will continue to be deducted.

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TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Date of Approval – 30 November 2023

Date of Review – November 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Kenilworth Town Council is committed to ensuring its staff and councillors are trained to the highest standard and kept up to date with all new legislation, as well as being able to deliver the Council's corporate aims and objectives each year by having the appropriate skills required.

1.2 To support this commitment, funds are allocated by the Council to a training budget each year to enable staff and councillors to attend training and conferences relevant to their office and prioritised to meet the needs of the Council in terms of service delivery, service and organisational planning and development.

2. Training Needs

Employees

2.1 The Town Clerk and Leader of the Council will have overall responsibility for monitoring and meeting the training needs of staff and managing the training budget.

2.2 Training needs cover many different areas and will be identified via the annual appraisal process. The Town Clerk's training and development needs will be identified via their annual appraisal carried out by the Leader of the Council and the training needs of other staff will be identified by the Town Clerk.

2.3 Training and development are the responsibility of each member of staff and all employees are encouraged to be proactive in identifying their needs.

2.4 Induction training will be provided to all new members of staff.

2.5 The Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Group Leaders of the Town Council and individual members of staff will identify training needs due to changed circumstances such as changes to legislation.

Councillors

2.6 Induction training will be provided to all new Members of the Council.

2.7 Training requirements for councillors will usually be identified by Group Leaders and the Town Clerk, with details being brought to the full Council.

2.8 Opportunities for councillors to attend courses will also be researched by the Town Clerk and shared with Members.

2.9 Individual training requirements will be discussed with Members and Members will also be provided with in-house training on an ad-hoc basis.

3. Prioritisation of Training and Development

3.1 Any personal development and training will be prioritised on the following basis: -

- Specialist needs e.g. Working Groups, Committees, Projects
- Improving existing skills
- Personal development

4. Resourcing Training

4.1 A budget will be provided for training and development on an annual basis and all training will be prioritised, organised, designed and evaluated to ensure that it meets organisational requirements.

4.2 Any member of staff may apply to take qualification training – any sponsorship by the council will depend on priorities relating to job roles and duties and each application will be considered on this basis.

4.3 The Council will pay the annual subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) to enable staff and councillors to take advantage of their training courses and conferences.

4.4 When training is approved, the Council will pay and/or assist with expenses incurred covering items like tuition and examination fees.

4.5 Travelling costs will be paid at the discretion of the Town Clerk.

4.6 Members of staff and councillors will be encouraged to attend training events which are relevant to their office.

4.7 New councillors will be provided with a full induction and information pack.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Date of Approval – 30 November 2023

Date of Review – November 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Kenilworth Town Council ("Council") aims to be responsive to the needs of the local community and to involve its residents and businesses in the Council's decision-making about the issues which affect them including planning, delivery of services and the future of the area. To achieve this, the Council will provide the community with:

1.1. relevant information about services, policies and decisions that might affect or interest them;
1.2. opportunities for them to have their say about decisions, services and plans through consultations, surveys and conversation;
1.3. opportunities to get involved, over and above informing and consulting, to give them a greater influence over decisions and delivery.

In doing so, the Council will follow the principles set out below.

2. HONESTY AND OPENNESS

2.1. Make clear the purpose of any engagement activity and use the right methods (proportionate to the significance of the issues) to engage the local community.
2.2. Be clear about what can be influenced.
2.3. Use honest, accurate and unbiased information.

3. HEARING

3.1. Hear and respond to individuals and communities, enabling and empowering them to play an effective role in setting priorities, designing services and influencing decisions to shape their local area.

4. INCLUSION

4.1. Undertake fair and impartial engagement to a high standard, ensuring equal opportunities are offered to participate in issues that may affect the community and make a difference.

4.2 Hard to Reach groups refers to those who experience social exclusion and are sometimes perceived as being disempowered. Some examples include young people, elderly people, physical disability, language barriers, financial constraints, cultural differences or social expectations. The Council will put effort into seeking their views.

5. WORKING TOGETHER

5.1. When representing the Council, councillors will work together and not take individual action without prior agreement.
5.2. The Council will share knowledge and information openly with residents and partner organisations, whilst respecting confidentiality.
5.3. Use what has been learnt from contact with local people to better understand and engage with the community, and to improve the services it delivers.

6. KEEPING IN TOUCH

6.1. Provide feedback and demonstrate the changes that are made as a result of engagement.
6.2. The Council will use the following tools to:

6.2.1. Inform:

a. Posters, fliers and publications;
b. Information stalls at appropriate functions and events;
c. Public and specific meetings including Council meetings and the Annual Parish Meeting;
d. Presentations, briefings;
e. Website updates, email, and digital media;

6.2.2. Consult:

a. Questionnaires and surveys;
b. Online surveys and e-consultation (via the internet);
c. Residents' Associations and community groups;
d. Discussion/focus groups/forums/e-forum;
e. Written consultation through letter or email;
f. Consultation events/workshops/exhibitions/general events;
g. Public, neighbourhood or specific meetings, including Community Forum meetings;
h. Documents or information available in offices, public buildings or online;

6.2.3. Involve:

a. Working parties;
b. Public or specific targeted discussion meetings with interested parties;
c. Public or stakeholder workshops to identify issues and shape options;
d. Public visioning events, ideas competitions, interactive displays;
e. Online discussion forums;
f. Community led plans (e.g. parish plans/neighbourhood plans)/community action plans;
g. Comments and complaints.

7. OUTCOMES

The outcomes which the Council is striving for and against which the success of this policy will be measured are:

• Improved communication through the establishment of new channels of engagement.

• More residents understanding the role of Councillors and getting the best effect.

• Improved engagement with local communities, with more people feeling that they are involved in decision-making and a higher percentage of people involved in volunteering.

• Improved satisfaction with services provided by the Council.

The Council will undertake regular surveys (frequency to be determined) amongst residents to assess the extent to which these outcomes are being achieved.